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## THE PARTITION OF AFRICA.

BY THE RIGHT HON. THE MARQUIS OF LORNE.

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PEOPLE are said to be apt to believe that things that are unknown must be magnificent, but, unless they are stirred to quick action by the special incentive of gain easily acquired, they are also apt to let that supposed magnificence remain an unknown quantity. There is something in the very vastness of such fields for exploration and enterprise as that of Africa which discourages men from interesting themselves in a subject so bewildering in its immensity. Of old it was so with regard to America. Men in England hardly knew where Canada or New England was situated on that great map which spread in desolation to the North Pole and the central deserts, and, with the exception of a few navigators, hardly cared whether the first-named countries were or were not near or far from California or Mexico. Even among the colonists themselves—yes, even as late as 1850—the words might be heard, “Go to California!” as though it meant banishment from any reasonable sphere of human interest. That this is not so now is only because the world is for all of us becoming smaller as its populations become greater. From the seething centres those who are pressed move more easily away.

Perhaps in regard to Africa there may have been in other days special forms of discouragement. Over tremendous spaces there is a climate which, unlike that of the American continent, is reeking with fevers; some very fatal, as on the Congo coast; some of a less formidable character, as on the eastern seaboard, and pervading what is known of the interior. Commercial companies, too, had not fared so well as might have been expected from the energy of those who undertook them and the large populations among which it was endeavored to force a way for trade. Scotsmen, at the time when the union with England was more

a vision than a reality, had formed an African company and had come to grief with the Darien scheme, chiefly owing to the jealousy of England. The Niger Company in later times had not made much profit.

To be sure, parts and spots and isolated fringes of the great Unknown Land were always held to be of value. The seaboard of the Mediterranean, on the north, was prized and coveted, and though the site of Carthage remained almost deserted, yet Algiers and Tangiers, and, above all, Egypt, had become bones of contention among the nations of Europe eager for predominant influence in that sea. The history and antiquities and wondrous relics of the civilization of old Egypt had excited the fancy, as well as the cupidity, of the seafaring peoples. And then again, far in the south, Great Britain had used the Cape of Good Hope as a stepping-stone to India, and had waged war after war to extend and consolidate her possessions in that region, ousting the Dutch, who have left in the Boers and colonists of their race a sturdy fragment not always friendly under this new dispensation, but now working together with the British in subduing the lands and their native lords. The same necessity on the part of the British to find outlets for their own and Indian trade had made portions of the continent facing India and the Red Sea better known. The jungles and the savages of the west coast had been touched and small settlements made, and the suppression of the slave-trade, a crusade on which England entered honestly enough, had worked in the direction of leading us on to exploration.

But as the government had always plenty to do elsewhere, but little regard was paid to Africa in general. The Portuguese were originally the only people that with their government had dreamed of extended empire. They had done a good deal along the coast, and remarkably well-constructed forts built by their engineers may be seen to this day along an extended line of stations, which embrace not only the African, but other coasts stretching towards India. They had also knowledge of the interior to a surprisingly accurate degree. In ancient Portuguese maps, dated 250 years ago, the great bend of the Congo is laid down. No one else had so boldly marked the course of that river, which remained a puzzle even to David Livingstone. Of course the latitude and longitude of the curve of the river from a course flowing northward to one flowing to the west were not pre-

cisely laid down in these Portuguese charts, but the general character was not incorrectly given. They had probably derived their information from no better source than that which also with more or less of correctness described the Nile as flowing from great lakes near the Mountains of the Moon, where dwell the pygmies, as shown in the maps of the geographers of the ancient world. Still the ancients, and later the Portuguese, had a better idea of these things than had the learned modern geographical world up to a period that the youngest of us can remember.

But we were long content to let the land of big apes, small men, and mighty lakes and mountains and forests, alone. We had too many other matters on hand, and richer, or apparently richer, fields still to be developed. But gradually a change has come, and now there is a thirst for African exploration and for empire in Africa, and a general scramble among civilized nations to share the continent between them; an eagerness to know more and get more, and to possess all that can be claimed and gained, that is remarkable and all-engrossing. King Leopold, of Belgium, probably anxious to give his vigorous people something better to think of than the perpetual squabbles between Clericals and Liberals, or the labor disputes of the crowded little kingdom, has, with singular wisdom and generosity, spent a large fortune in securing for them the so-called Congo State—territory that enters by a narrow avenue along that river into the interior and then expands until its flanks rest, upon the north, on regions near the sources of the Nile; and on the south its limits are not very far from the River Zambesi.

France has a large slice to the north of the Congo, and, more important still as regards European politics, she has secured the reversion of the Belgian territories; for there is an agreement in existence that gives to her a redemption right over all of them if at any time the Belgians do not care to continue in possession of the heritage that has been secured for them by their wise and far-seeing ruler. The Portuguese have still an immense block on the west coast to the south of the Congo State, and a considerable share of the east coast, including the invaluable harbor of Delagoa Bay. Then Germany again, on both sides, has great possessions in the country opposite to Zanzibar Island on the east, and on the Atlantic to the south of Portugal.

Britain has hitherto been represented not only by her great

colony of the Cape, but also by several companies whose agents and explorers have hoisted her flag around the Transvaal Republic and have called themselves the South African Company. Then to the north of these are the British Lakes Company, and, if we leap across the German belt opposite Zanzibar, the East African Company, possessing a splendid harbor in Mombassa, on the Indian Ocean. These last possessions now continue northward until in Abyssinia they meet the Italian protectorates; for the Italians, too, have been subject to the African epidemic, and their King Humbert is as eager as is King Leopold that in the division of the new black world his power shall rank with the others in exercising at least some influence.

Never, probably, in the history of the world was there such a rapid portioning-out of other men's goods; for, of course, the natives have not been represented at any of the conferences that have been held in the distant capitals of the invading white men! Yet these natives are in number as the sands of the sea, and it is over no scattered series of bands, such as existed in America in the case of the Indians, that dominion is to be exercised, but over organized peoples and confederacies, some of whom could place two hundred thousand men in dusky array of battle. Truly it is a wonderful phenomenon—this pouncing of northern eagles and lions upon the abodes and realms of the black man. And why is it? Oh, for their good, of course! We shall stop their mauling and enslaving each other, and they ought to be grateful, and would be so if they only knew what unselfish intentions we one and all of us have!

Meantime there is some suspicion that some of us may not be quite so good as we say we all are: so we come together in far-away Europe, and we pledge ourselves, each, all, and severally, to do as follows. What a pity it is, by the way, that the Indian Department at Washington, at least, is not represented among these kings of men!

"In the name of God Almighty" (then follow the names of the contending sovereigns), "all of whom being animated by the firm intention of putting an end to the crimes and devastations engendered by the traffic in African slaves, effectively protecting the native populations of Africa, and insuring for this vast continent the benefits of peace and civilization; wishing to give a fresh sanction to the decisions already taken in the same sense and at different epochs by the powers to complete the results obtained by them, and to draw up a scheme of measures guaranteeing the accomplishment of the work which is the object of their common solicitude, have resolved to hold a conference at Brussels, and declare that the most effective means for counteracting the slave-trade in the interior of Africa are: progressive

organization of the administrative, judicial, religious, and military services in the African territories placed under the sovereignty of civilized nations ; the gradual establishment in the interior by the powers to which the territories are subject of strongly-occupied stations, in such a way as to make their protective or repressive action effectively felt in the territories devastated by slave-hunting ; the construction of roads, and in particular of railroads, connecting the further stations with the coast, and permitting easy access to the inland waters and on the upper courses of the rivers and streams broken by rapids and cataracts, in view of substituting economical and rapid means of transport for the present means of carriage by men ; installation of steamboats on the inland navigable waters and on the lakes, supported by fortified posts established on the banks ; telegraphs, expeditions, and *colonnes mobiles* to keep up the communication between the stations and secure the routes ; the restriction of importation of firearms and ammunition."

There are also provisions, which, it is to be hoped, will be honestly carried out, in regard to the importation of spirituous liquors, each nation undertaking to institute a line beyond which prohibition shall be absolute for any quantity of liquor brought for trade purposes. All these things they pledge themselves to do, and mean to do, and a good deal more—for it is now confidently believed that ivory and gold and diamonds may be found in remunerative quantities.

The words of the agreement are ample enough, and might be held to imply that the governments themselves would actively aid, by the use of moneys drawn from the public treasuries, any efforts made by their subjects in the direction indicated. Portugal must, indeed, have done so directly, and her example has been largely followed of late by Germany. The German Chancellor who followed Bismarck into power has sustained the work of Peters and Wissmann by grants from the exchequer, and comparatively little of the money spent has been contributed by merchants and other private persons. Caprivi, in the Reichstag, indicated that he thought that in England the citizens were willing to embark their money in such ventures as those involved in opening up Africa, but that, such not being the case in Germany, it was necessary to aid by government support. Unless very satisfactory results are obtained, it remains to be seen how much the German nation will allow their government to spend, especially in view of the very heavy taxation levied at home in preparation for another war with France. France herself has not spent much on her African possessions, but she has entered on a policy of largely subsidizing her mercantile marine. The Messageries Company receives no less than £600,000 per annum, and runs steamers on each side of the Indian Ocean. While Britain has been content to give very little assistance to her navigation

companies, Germany, again, has granted no less than £45,000 to a line of steamers running down to Zanzibar. It will be a curious study to watch how these artificial, or, at all events, extraneous, encouragements to mercantile traffic will fare. If these nations care only to have their flag flying from a considerable merchant marine, they must pay heavily for it while competing with the British services which depend almost entirely upon the natural profits made in their business.

But why is it that so much rivalry is being developed in regard to the Dark Continent? Several causes have led to it, and the seeds of the fever have been long sown in the system. Schweinfurth was probably the father of the colonization societies which have sprung up in Germany having a hankering after Africa; but there has long been a feeling there that "*das Vaterland muss grösser sein*," and that it is not altogether satisfactory to German pride that Uncle Sam takes so many Germans away from the said Vaterland to turn them into undeniable American citizens in the second, or at most in the third, generation. Unfortunately, the "colonization" societies have as yet chosen places which are not favorable for white men to colonize. New Guinea, for instance, is far worse than Equatoria. Germans have always been famous for their accurate map-making, but they have grown somewhat impatient of only mapping the countries belonging to other flags, and they naturally exult that the black, white, and red now waves over such extensive lands that somewhere, whether in the south or on the plateaus of the hotter parts of Africa, there may be standing-room for patriotic men who must leave home, but desire to carry their banner with them. Some day they may meet France in Africa, but in the mean time, and until the Belgians see fit to drop their prize, the Congo State forms a wide buffer between Teuton and Gallic influence.

There have been other distinguished travellers, notably Du Chaillu, who can be held as originally French, but the British travellers who have made their mark far outrank all others, both in numbers and in importance; and it is to them that we owe in the main the interest manifested in the new countries. Every one will remember the work of Livingstone; but Speke and Grant, who labored so lovingly and courageously together; Sir Samuel Baker and his heroic wife; Burton, famous on the Red Sea littoral as by his translation of the "*Arabian Nights*" and his won-

drous journey as a Mohammedan pilgrim to Mecca ; James in kindred regions ; and, above all, the marvellous careers of Gordon and of Stanley, have fixed attention on the possibilities lying latent in spaces as varied as they are vast. There is no doubt also that the rich finds of gold in the Transvaal and of diamonds at Kimberley, with the reports that have come in of an apparently limitless supply of the precious metal in many places, have excited the public mind so that it would not be difficult in London, at least, to get funds to start mines wherever a prospector had penetrated and hammered the rock or washed the gravel in a river.

Livingstone, to be sure, did little to encourage the idea of gold. The only gold visible about him was the gold of his character, and a remarkable hat-band of the same color he always persisted in wearing, whether in Africa or in Europe. That gilded hat-band had probably much to do with the conversion of the savage to Christianity, which was the purpose for which Livingstone travelled, toiled, and died. He had probably found it an open sesame to distinction in the minds of the natives. It was a most awe-inspiring diadem ; and if it avails on the captain's head or the merchantman's deck, why should it not help discipline and enforce awe on the children of Ham ? When there remained little to mark Livingstone as an Englishman, when his skin was burned dark brown, and his speech had become almost wholly Makololo, that golden hat-band remained to distinguish him outwardly from all others.

But how far above any ordinary mortal's was that man's character ! None more pure, more faithful, more unselfish, more calmly courageous and merciful, was ever formed by God. To lift the dweller in heathen degradation in heart and body to happier consciousness and higher existence, and to learn the secrets of his land, that it, with him, should be open to better influences, was his sole and simple end and aim. He delighted, too, in the majesty of the new scenes he was the first to see and to describe. I remember how, after a long walk in the Highlands, he threw himself down in quiet delight on the heather on a hill summit, and compared his own Scotland with the country in which he had spent so many trying years. He liked to describe in his slow speech, full of the acquired gutturals and liquid sounds of the African tongue he had so long spoken, his impressions of some of the great wonders of nature in Africa. Thus he lingered over his



remembrance of the first time he saw the Victoria Falls. He had known Niagara ; but these falls were like a great succession of Niagaras in long rank, thundering into a huge crevasse or long split in the plain—a cleft so narrow that the effect of the great breadth of this cataract was lost unless the traveller were close to the abyss. Perhaps, he said, we might say that it was an advantage that we did not get that impression from a distance that rendered Niagara from the Suspension Bridge too much like a big mill-sluice.

It was admiration for Livingstone that led Stanley on his adventurous quest, and Stanley's fame and deeds have ever since incessantly called men's minds to the paths he trod. When Du Chaillu had found for us the gorilla, Stanley found our Livingstone, and then the true course and great value of the Congo, and then, in searching for Emin, the dwarfs, the vast forest full of elephants, and the wide plains, the uplands, and the mountains that give birth to that river on which we may fear there will yet be many a fight for empire—the Nile, with its annual tide, the only river of the ancient world which retains on its banks the peoples which have lasted and lived while Nineveh and Babylon have sunk into the desert beside their streams, and are only heaps of sand giving no shelter even to the rudest nomad.

So it is a strange mixture of sentiments that has given rise to this thirst that has afflicted or blessed the world to enter Africa, and to behold the yet unseen ; the holy zeal to strike the chains from slaves ; the love of adventure that makes conquest a pleasure ; the curiosity of science that causes geography to be a delight ; and the greed of gold and pride of dominion that in martial rivalry must subdue, possess, and organize the lands that shall yield a tribute to the god of commerce, and help the ever-growing comfort and luxury of the teeming millions of civilized mankind.

The share which has fallen to the East African Company is especially interesting at the present moment, when a part of it has been so graphically described by Mr. Stanley that, with the aid of his pen and the illustrations which accompany the text, we are as familiar with the scenery of the western side of the Lake Victoria Nyanza as we are with Broad Street or Piccadilly. We feel to know the faithful tribes who, with his own Zanzibaris, rescued Emin Pacha's discontented soldiers not only from the hosts of

Kaba Rega and the Ballegas, but from the consequence of their own frivolity, treachery, and mutiny.

The territories gained for the British protectorate are divided from the Congo State by a line running nearly due north, and therefore including the province of Equatoria, the scene of Emin's temporary viceroyalty, and both banks of the Nile, with the valuable stations of Lado and Wadelai. Here we trench on the abortive work of Gordon. May we not at some time avenge his death and have recompense for the dismal page in our history stamped with the name of Khartoum? The two smaller lakes, Albert Edward and Albert Nyanza, lie the one partially and the other wholly within our limits. Recent accounts show that their waters are probably receding, but they will form useful channels of communication by steamers until railways can be brought to their banks. The countries of Unyoro and Ankori and Uganda are pleasant and populous. Colonel Grant formed a very high estimate of the qualities of the people of Uganda. "If my old friend Mtesa, the king, were now alive," says he, "you would have little difficulty in bringing a railway to those parts, for if the king had held up his little finger, you would have had in his day thousands of eager warriors prepared to work as navies on the lines, and their grading could all have been done by setting his nation to work in the west while you approached from the sea."

But now revolutions and changes have shattered the monarchical power among the Waganda, and we can no longer entertain any confident hopes that they can give much material assistance. Missionaries always do good in the "long run." But at first the effect of their natural rivalry is a little disappointing. For instance, in Uganda the Roman Catholic missionaries and their Protestant brethren have divided the people into two hostile camps. Perhaps, as in other lands, the belligerents only took the mask of religion. Anyhow, the "Katoliki," as the Roman Catholic blacks call themselves, are at civil war with the "men of the book," as the Protestant blacks are called. Then the Arabs come and use these divisions, and the king, Mwanga, had lately to hold his court in the security of an island in the great Lake Victoria, because he was powerless on the main land. Serious conflicts have occurred between the rival factions, and the missionaries have been more occupied with dressing wounds of late

than with the cure of souls. All will, no doubt, soon come right, but the old united nation of Uganda has been rent in twain, and is likely, under the Arab guidance, to oppose in part, a resistance to the approach of the forces of the East African Company.

It must in any event take time to advance the roads so far. The mountain group of Ruwanzori and, further south, of Mfum-biro (the initial M's are pronounced—Mumfumbiro, Mumtesa, Mumpapwa, etc.) will afford perfect sites for hill stations for Europeans and persons unable to bear the heat of the plains. Cotton can probably be made to thrive on the west and north of the lake, as well as nearer the seacoast. There are fine forests around the shores, comprising trees that yield very valuable timber. Corn is grown, and millet, beans, sugar-cane, bananas, and plantains; great herds of cattle and goats and sheep meet the eyes of the traveller.

Again, there seems no end to the supply of India-rubber. The quality is of the best, as the London merchants testify. It is easy to gather the gum harvest. Trees are tapped, and the viscid sap flows out in such sort that the pliant threads can be wound round and round the first bit extracted, so that very soon you have an elastic ball that bounds off the ground again to your hand.

The lake itself is two hundred and thirty miles long and almost as broad, and possesses good harbors and many sheltering islands. Steamers will at once be built in England and sent out in sections, and the carriage of them up country will not long be delayed. It is intended also to construct a light line starting from Mombassa, on the seacoast, to traverse the plateaus and have its terminus on the lake.

Although there are some demarcations of the frontier line with the German territories which are by no means what could be wished, considering how much we in the past have done in these countries and how novel the German zeal for their acquisition has been, yet, on the whole, we may be fairly satisfied with the arrangements concluded recently at Berlin.

The country along the proposed railway route has been only partially explored. There is a bad tract along the coast and then hills occur. The wood is dense and necessitates incessant cutting as progress is made inland. Especially troublesome is this when camels have to be taken through the jungle. Forts or stockades are being erected at intervals. The Gallas are a formidable race,

keeping the other natives in great awe of them. But there is great encouragement to make a caravan route, for water is plentiful at all times of the year at convenient places. It is reported that there is much cultivation of the land by the natives of Fula-doyo, and villages are frequent and large. There is sufficient grass for fodder. The policy adopted is to free at once all slaves brought along from the interior in gangs, and, in regard to the Arab domestics, to free them by letting them earn a little money wherewith their freedom is purchased. In the interior the Masai are perpetually making raids and carrying off cattle and gear, and there is no doubt that a force will be required to keep these and similar gentry in order.

The soil is often good. The openings in the forest are clothed with excellent grass. The rock is generally of a slaty character, well adapted for building, and among the beds are frequent bands of quartz which seem to be auriferous. Copper in sulphate form has been found, and plumbago. At Machacos, again, a stockade has been made. Further on there may be some trouble with streams in flood, and with the quicksands that are left in the dryer seasons of the year. A place called Nzoi is the next station, and here granite appears, and then the river Kibweji is reached, flowing through a district good for white men because elevated and wholesome, the water being excellent and flowing over great beds of lava.

But this sketch covers only part of the route, and fresh explorations must be made before the remainder of the road to the lake can be even located. Among the vegetable products which are remarkable is a species of aloe called mbouge, with a very strong fibre, capable of resisting moisture. The natives, says Captain Lugard, who has written very interesting notes, extract this fibre very cleverly, and it may prove more valuable than hemp. The supply is absolutely unlimited, and, as it can be floated down the rivers, the transport will cost nothing.

Mr. Jackson has penetrated with an expedition further than Captain Lugard, and has reached the lake shore. His men were too much afraid of the Arabs to let him lead them into Uganda. They were also attacked in the neighborhood of the lake by many native tribes, and another expedition with nearly 400 rifles has been sent to make good the road. It was found that there was much ivory in the country, but its possessors were unwilling to

sell it for anything but cattle, and cattle the expedition could not give. "Blood-brotherhood" was made with some of the chiefs, and it is evident that we shall have some sturdy allies on our side. The ceremony necessary for this making of blood-brotherhood differs with different tribes. In one case it was necessary for the unfortunate white leader to cut a little piece out of his own flesh and give it to the chief, who gave a similar savory morsel to his English ally. Both then had to eat their gift! Great herds of cattle and of smaller domestic animals were seen. The natives have poisoned arrows, and are evidently good at bargaining. They are very numerous, and their country may contain much mineral treasure, but the geologist and mineralogist have not yet examined the rocks. In 700,000 square miles there must be much to discover, and much that will be of great commercial value.

Of these and other possibilities it is as yet too early to speak. But of this we may be sure: that, whether our progress be slow or fast,—and too great haste may not mean better speed, unless we can, as we march, conciliate the natives,—we shall do our best to keep from the inhabitants the plagues that have too often followed the white man,—drunkenness and disease,—and we shall most certainly, as we go, spread the blessing of freedom until the slave-driver, with his manacles, yokes, and whips, shall be only an evil memory of the past.

LORNE.